

ADDRESS

OF

M. H. CHAMBERLIN, A. M., LL. B.

PRESIDENT OF

McKENDREE COLLEGE,

DELIVERED

At the Educational Anniversary of the Southern Illinois
M. E. Conference, September 29, 1894,

PUBLISHED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.



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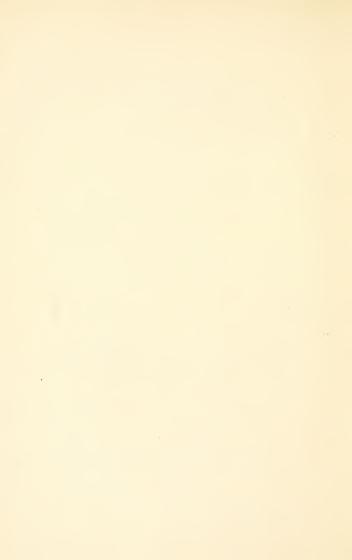
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McKendree College.

COUNT it no ordinary honor to have the privilege of standing in this splendid presence to present the claims of McKendree College.

Any assemblage of clergymen is entitled to preeminent respect, since its members represent a class who chose their vocation upon the theory that the greatest exaltation comes from servitude to others,

and, in taking up their profession, they turn their backs on the objects which prove most inviting and alluring to the hearts and minds of the masses with which they are surrounded. Possessions, money, worldly honor, social distinction—all prize objects in the race being made by the world for pre-eminence—are ordered to the rear of their purposes, and, with the Man of Sorrows as the true ideal of greatness, they enter life's conflict looking only for the crown of laurel when life's burdens are loosened at the portals of the grave.

Without invidious discrimination, it has often occurred to me that the branch of clergy before which I am now permitted to stand are entitled to distinctive credit, since, under the dispensation of the itinerant system, you add to the catalogue of abandoned objects, so dear to the human heart, the sacrifice of a local habitation, or home, grounding your faith on the principle that, when life's fitful fever is over, you will be given mansions made without hands, under the shelter of which you will abide forever, and have, as a member and companion of the household, the once forsaken and agonized personage of Gethsemane, as an elder brother.

Your profession was that of my father, and, holding the views I have expressed concerning its exalted character, it can in no sense be regarded as a passing compliment that I appreciate the honor you accord in giving me audience this evening.

I am not here to discourse on the importance of education; neither shall I presume to discuss, before an audience like this, the conceded importance of christian education further than to say that if the youthful student would become an orator, poet, philosopher, statesman, physician or philanthrophist, he will find in the Man of Bethlehem the most conspicuous model—the one above all others most fit for imitation and emulation.

What I would be glad to enforce is that the institutions which have been founded to foster higher education, along lines of Christian philosophy, should be well patronized and maintained by the constituency which promoted their establishment. With this thought I am brought directly to my subject, and, in discussing it, I am only presenting the claims of that which belongs to you by inheritance, and a greater inheritance, of like character, has never fallen to the lot of any other Conference within the boundaries of Methodism. I am not overstating the case, and, because of having been so recently elected President of your College-my Alma Mater—I hope you will not regard me as presumptuous if I venture to say that I am impressed with the conviction that you unconsciously undervalue your possession, on the principle that those things which are most familiar to us-no matter how great their importance—become so commonplace that we often fail to appreciate their full significance.

Some of your number may not be familiar with certain facts I

wish to present. You will therefore indulge me while I first state that which the business world would call the more practical features of my subject:

The College is located at Lebanon, twenty-four miles from the center of the great city of St. Louis, with which city it is connected by the main line of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, making the seat of your institution easy of access by means of the thirty-two railroads which radiate to all parts of the United States, from St. Louis as a center. It owns twenty acres of ground in solid body in the form of an oblong square—the location being an elevated site. and crowned with a native growth of trees, which long since won for this spot the repute of being the prettiest natural college campus in the United States, while one person, of literary repute, who has traveled over Europe, says it is not surpassed, for natural beauty, by any like location over the sea. In the center of the campus are located the three College buildings constructed of brick-one, the recitation building, three stories in height, the upper having two commodious halls which are occupied by the literary societies, controled by the young men of the institution. These societies are elegantly furnished, and equipped with good libraries, and in all the colleges of the United States there cannot be found better literary societies than those belonging to McKendree. Men of national repute, who have been educated at McKendree, point to these societies as veritable schools of debate and oratory, and to them they attribute their success on the platform and in the pulpit. The two lower stories of this building are divided into eight large recitation rooms. The College Chapel is a two-story building, the upper being a large audience room, while the lower is divided into three apartments, containing, respectively, the literary society of the young ladies-handsomely furnished-the museum and cabinet. and the library of the institution, with its 8,000 volumes. The third building is Science Hall, containing the laboratory, and is where the natural sciences are taught.

The grounds, buildings and equipments are valued at \$65,000. There is a solvent active endowment fund of \$25,000. In addition,

there are two legacies in the sum of \$12,000 to \$13,000 in the one case, and from \$20,000 to \$25,000 in the other—the actual amount depending on accumulating interest—which will vest in the College, on the death of certain aged persons who are at present beneficiaries of these funds. There are also two wills in which provisional bequests are made to McKendree, with the amounts unknown. The actual known assets of the College may therefore be stated as follows:

| 65,000 25,000 32,000 |
|----------------------------|
| 22,000 |

Against this are certain liabilities which are secured on the property of the College, and heretofore reported to your Conference. At your last annual session a portion of this debt was distributed among the various charges of the Conference, on a pro rata basis, to be raised by contribution.

Regarding this policy as a mistaken one, I so expressed myself to the Executive Committee of the College, when entering upon my duties as President, at the same time suggesting that the entire indebtedness of the Institution should be paid at home, after which the Conference, and old friends of the Institution, should be called upon to add to its present endowment fund a sum sufficient to lodge it on a sound financial basis. The suggestion was cordially approved by the members of the Executive Committee, as you will note by their report already presented to your body in legislative session, wherein they propose to undertake the task of raising an amount sufficient to free the College from debt, after which it will be laid before the Conference, the general public and old students, with the request that they unite in an effort to add to the present fund of endowment the further sum of \$75,000.

That object attained, and you will have \$100 000 of live endowment, which would yield a stated revenue for the annual support of the Board of Instruction, as also an augmented tuition income from a largely increased attendance of students who would

be brought within the gates of the College by virtue of the fact of the new life which the accomplished endowment would render certain. The income from these two sources would enable the College to double its present force of instruction, on advanced salaries, and leave a surplus fund sufficient to keep it equipped with the necessary appliances to meet the requirements of advancing science. Nor would that be the end-only the beginning. With \$100,000 endowment, confidence would be so re-established in the old College throughout the entire west, where, at one time, its name was a household word in almost every home, and legacies, bequests and donations would hasten to the assistance of McKendree, and make of her, eventually, the great University vouchsafed by her unusually liberal charter. In other words, \$100,000 secured now, by solicitation, would mean that, in the not distant future, all needed means for the further enlargement of the usefulness of the institution would come to it by force of moral gravitation.

Within a few weeks after the adjournment of this Conference I expect to be able to announce to the public that the indebtedness has been paid, and by the coming of the next Commencement, in June, I dare to hope that it will be my privilege to announce that the endowment has been augmented to the sum of \$100,000. These thoughts are not utopian. Through correspondence and personal conference with old friends and former students of the College, to whom the above financial plans have been submitted, there have come replies—and in some instances from across a gap of more than 40 years—"Give us our Alma Mater, stripped of debt, and on a sound financial basis, and you shall have our substantial co-operation, in the matter of her endowment."

If this Conference were without a college, and some generous individual were to step to this platform and in this grand presence offer to furnish you \$122,000 of assets to plant a college within your boundaries, conditioned on your raising the sum of \$75,000, I verily believe, in your love of God and burning zeal for the promotion of higher education, you would rise to the height of the occasion, by making provision for every dollar of the required amount

before the lights of this evening's entertainment should have been extinguished.

I have said, in McKendree College you have an inheritance greater than ever fell to the lot of any other Conference within the boundaries of Methodism. The \$122,000 is as dust in the balance compared to the moral prestige McKendree has achieved in its history of sixty years' duration. In her Classical and Scientific courses, she has always ranked with the best of American colleges. A certificate of a completed course of study secured from McKendree's president, over thirty years ago, was honored by Yale, who granted a diploma to the holder, while one of the most eminent surgeons of the West, who graduated at McKendree, and who subsequently pursued a medical course of study at Berlin University, was congratulated by the authorities of that institution, who examined him for admission, for speaking the purest latin of any American student who had ever applied for matriculation.

The nearly 700 students who have taken their diplomas at McKendree, and the 9,000 who have been partially educated within her walls, have done noble service in building up western civilization. They have sounded on all the altars of life, and have been found in every clime, where civilization has gone. While under Methodist auspices, McKendree has never been sectarian. The pulpit of every denomination is represented by her sons, and the great missionary sermon to which you listened vesterday was preached by one of her graduates. At the bar, throughout the west, her children have won honorable distinction, some having become nationally conspicuous; while on the bench, of most of the western states, they are holding with even hands the scales of justice. In the halls of legislation, both State and National, Mc-Kendree's influence has been conspicuously prominent, and, at one time, it is said, that every one of the higher officers in the State of Missouri were McKendreeans. As teachers in our schools and colleges they are rendering eminent service. In editorial life they are notably prominent; while on the farm, in the shop at the counter, and in following the ever lengthening and expanding paths

of commerce, they have kept abreast of the foremost workers of the age. In short, the work this Institution has done in its long history has been one of the most potent factors in building up the civilization of the Mississippi Valley. In all this there is a wealth which money cannot buy—which makes the \$122,000 of tangible assets, valuable as they are, pale into insignificance when set over against the greater record of moral prestige which McKendree has achieved.

The late Senator Stanford has made himself immortal by dedicating a good portion of his collossal fortune to planting a college on the Pacific coast, to commemorate the life of an only son, but with all his munificent outlay Stanford University, great as it is, fails to have what is found in this Institution of yours—a record. The merit of an educational institution must be measured by the work it has accomplished, and any new enterprise of this character must have twenty-five years of history before it can be fairly claimed to have entered upon a career of usefulness in the moulding of thought, and in the shaping of wholesome public opinion. When Stanford is twenty-five years old, McKendree will be pressing hard toward the mark of a century, and should the first steps I have mentioned be successfully taken—as I expect them to be—I venture the prediction that her endowments will eventually become not unlike those of the California University.

To say that McKendree College is the oldest educational institution in the west carries with it a meaning of great significance, and, in that fact alone, you have, as a Conference, the distinguished honor of being the patron of the pioneer of all the western institutions which have been dedicated by charter to university education.

It was founded back yonder in the same year the railway system was born; before Morse had unlocked the secret whereby the world is now filled with electrified intelligence; when St. Louis, on the banks of the Father of Waters, was but a frontier trading post; when the grand prairie of this state—embracing an area almost equal to an empire—untouched by the plow of the husbandman, was a wilderness of flowers, which, when fanned by

the wind, billowed under the rays of the glistening sun like the waves of a phosphorescent ocean. It was when the whole of Illinois was a single Conference, in which my father traveled as an itinerant. While I was yet a child I have heard him tell of whole days' journey on horseback, on the prairies of Illinois, without sighting a single habitation. The pioneers of that day, in their wisdom, counted the prairies wastes in nature—wastes which could never be populated because of the absence of timber. It was across these great prairies the early emigrants held their slow course from day to day in their western pilgrimage, wearing the horizon about them as a girdle, camping at nightfall on carpets variegated with all the colors of the rainbow, and under a blue sky blazing with magnified stars, holding the woodlands of Silver Creek as the object of their pilgrimage, where they located Lebanon, and where also, in the name of the Master of the Ages, they planted the seed of higher education, giving to the west McKendree College as its pioneer institution.

If McKendree should levy tribute on every western community she would not be peaching on the ground of any other like institution, from the fact that this vast territory was originally hers by right of pre-emption; if she should sail the educational sea of the west, and demand tribute from every craft of like character, it could not be called a piratical mission, since hers was the first prow to split its waters. Happily, this is not necessary, for this Conference, and the great city of St. Louis—the smoke of whose fiery furnaces are in constant sight of McKendree College—could furnish the patronage which would make it one of the leading American educational Mecas.

It is yours to give the cause of McKendree, backed with its 60 years of history—with the use of but a comparatively small amount of money—an impetus which would cause St. Louis to make Lebanon its chief educational suburb, and the young men and women graduating from her halls would count much on the honor of holding their diplomas from an institution which outranks all others, in the west, in point of duration.

It is no small honor that your denomination should have the credit of founding the first educational institution in the west, and, in the subsequent subdivisions of this vast territory into various conferences, it should be a matter of great pride with you that McKendree should have fallen within the lines which constitute your boundaries.

The world venerates the beginning of all great events in history. Bunker Hill, where the first blood of the Revolution was spilt, is consecrated to freedom forevermore. Harvard college, which had its humble beginning in the contributions of silver plate and a few other like personal holdings, which were sold for a few pounds sterling, to commence the great work of its founding, goes into history as the oldest of American educational institutions, the pride of New England, and honored of the world. What Harvard is to the East, McKendree should be to the west, by reason of the fact that it is its first monument to higher education.

An accurate history of McKendree College would read like a marvel. Its writer would record prayers as fervent as were ever lifted to God, and chronicle benevolent sacrifices as complete as were ever made for any cause; he would name its founder first as a private soldier in the Revolution, and afterwards the trusted friend of Washington, and an important figure in the struggle which made us an independent people. All through the peaceful years of our history, as already cited, your historian would show how in every avocation her sons were conspicuous figures in laying the foundations of civil society in the great west, and when disloyal guns fired on Fort Sumpter, he would tell you how, with feet almost winged, like the fabled god of old, they rushed to the field of battle; how that the seats of the recitation room were emptied to follow Colonel Moore, the mathematical professor, in defense of the flagall to maintain the government which Bishop McKendree was no unimportant figure in founding. In speaking of the Civil War he would note a fact of no mean significance in that General Wilson. a graduate of McKendree, should have effected the capture of the fleeing President of the dving Confederacy in his attempt to escape justice in the disguise of garments taken from the wardrobe of his wife.

Have I made any mistake in speaking of the magnitude of your inheritance?

How cruel it is that oblivion's waters should be allowed to rise encircle and finally engulf the fame of great men whose lives had been given, in the spirit of sacrifice, to the cause of God and humanity. It is a crime against coming generations that the splendid examples of men who make themselves willing sacrifices upon the altar of every good cause should be lost to history. It is a duty of society to keep such characters in constant remembrance, and hold them up to the youth of the country as inspiring examples for imitation and emulation.

Greater hands than those of Bishop McKendree never laid the foundations of any educational enterprise. Born in Virginia, first a private soldier under Washington, and subsequently promoted by him to be his commissary, he served, as already stated, through the Revolution and shared the glory of achieving his country's independence. The zeal with which he espoused the cause of his country was only overmatched by that with which he subsequently entered into the service of the Divine Master. He was the first American Bishop of the great church of your denomination, and as such he traveled in a parish greater than the domain ruled over by the government which he helped to establish. He was a man of great breadth of comprehension, statesmanlike views, gentleness of spirit, indefatigable in labors, and of unsurpassed eloquence as a preacher. The cautious, conservative and scholarly McClintock, in writing of him, a few years ago, says: "He was not only the most truly eloquent Bishop that his church has ever posessed, but one of the best preachers of any age or any church." Such was the founder of your College. He it was who chose Lebanon, as the spot above all others best fitted for the location of an institution of advanced learning, and to it he gladly gave his all in the faith that the growing community with which it was surrounded would make abundant provision for its future. Can any monument be

too great to commemorate the life of this great man of God and patriot of the Revolution?

With all his great record, I know of but a single tribute—aside from this college which bears his name—which looks to the perpetuation of his memory, and that the elegant McKendree Chapel, at Nashville, Tenn., built by the munificence of Col. Cole, one of the south's most noble christian gentlemen.

Shall McKendree College, with all the moral forces which make it really great—briefly hinted at above—and surrounded by all the wealth which its benign influence has largely helped to create, longer languish for want of proper financial support?

It must not be forgotten that the great Bishop Ames, one of Lincoln's chief advisers, during the trying ordeal of the Civil War, was the first Principal of this Institution when it was known as the Lebanon Seminary, and that the equally great Dr. Akers-overmodest in refusing to stand for election to the Episcopacy on the ground of unworthiness-was the first President of the College, after it assumed the founder's name, and on the nomination of the founder himself. In this last recital you have a trio of great personages who were participants in the inauguration of this significant educational enterprise, and I ask again, shall McKendree College longer suffer for the want of means to make it all that its founder expected it to become, when he gave it the 400 acres of land which constituted the all of his earthly possessions? The consecrated wealth of Christianity will answer "No;" American patriotism will say "No;" the Episcopal Cabinet, I venture to suggest. could afford, in executive session, to answer "No!" in behalf of the memory of the first American Bishop of its church, and without having lodged against it any charge of discrimination. I feel that this Conference answers "No!" and I am assured the old students will answer "No!" and with an emphasis which will result in placing it, financially, where its great moral merit deserves—among the greatest of our American colleges.

"All is well" were the last whispered words of the dying Mc-Kendree. So it was with him, but how will it be with you. and me, and the possessors of wealth on every hand, if the great work of your patriot Bishop were left to perish, or to drag out a precarious existence? It is only the generous characters of the race, who do not live for self alone, that can face the eternal, and hail the world with the parting salutation of "all is well" when the glazed curtains of the eyes are being stealthily drawn down by death's unseen fingers. Characters like these have been, from their scanty means, contributors to the support of this first beacon light of education in the west, and the Master, who made the widowed giver of her mite one of the most conspicuous figures in history—by what the sceptical scientist might call an unmathematical statement—will see to it that the sacrifices af both dead and living saints shall be honored in the perpetuation of McKendree through all the coming ages.

Knowing, as I do, the history of McKendree College, I stand here to say that it would be more than a marvel if any like enterprise has ever been the subject of more wonderful providences. The whole gamut of human experience, except tragedy, has been run and exemplified in its remarkable history. I said except tragedy; well nigh that too, in the past, from factional strife—an ordeal which it seems all great undertakings must undergo, as a sort of fire test of the metal of which they are made. Happily that era has long since passed by with your Institution, and it is only mentioned here as one of the causes which will explain the paradox of its present poverty, in the center of the greatest wealth of the Mississippi Valley, and with a history the origin of which runs almost parallel with the beginnings of western society.

I have a friend, a banker, who has served his State in public life with honorable distinction, and who, more than once, has stepped into the breach when your College was in an extremity. He makes no pretence of being a christian, but has said to me, time and again, with great warmth of feeling, "In McKendree College is a clear case of providential interposition, and the occurrence of a calamity sufficient to overwhelm it, after all it has endured, would be impossible."

In this electrical era, new modes of thought, as well as new modes of motion, are stimulating the minds of the public, and, more than ever before, men of means are turning their attention to higher education. In different localities colleges are being planted, and munificently endowed, with the wealth of philanthropic men who feel that a perpetuation of their names in this way will yield better fruitage to the world than if dispensed upon children, raised in the lap of luxury, and without due appreciation of its value. Even the secular world is discovering that college training, based on christian philosophy, brings wisdom—an inheritance more to be coveted than that of material accumulation.

After all that I have said of McKendree's great history, it is but a hint at what it has accomplished. There is a venerable man. Benj. Hypes, Esq., at the seat of McKendree, whom I have known from my boyhood. In his prime he was a magnificent specimen of physical manhood—the double of President Fillmore. Nor was he, though a quiet citizen, inferior in other respects to the President he so strongly resembled. He was one of the seventeen original charter members of your institution, and, with the single exception of himself, every one of that number has passed into the land of shadows. After God, and family, McKendree ranks next in his affections. His life, like a parenthesis, embraces the long career of your institution. Though, at the great age of 90, and with a body well nigh a wreck, his mind is as clear as a crystal, and day after day he sits at his window facing McKendree—as Daniel turned toward Jerusalem—and, in like spirit with that ancient worthy, he pays his devotions to God, lifting up, in his aspiring prayers, the interests of the College for which he gladly made sacrifices for a full half century. If you could sit down by him and have him tell the story of your Institution, as he has to me, you would see how far short I have fallen in describing the moral magnitude of your inheritance.

This country furnishes no greater moral foundation upon which to build an educational university than that which I have attempted to describe this evening. The time is ripe for the undertaking. Old animosities have long since died out. Only indifference, begotten of misapprehension, needs to be cured by the knowledge that a business dispensation has been inaugurated, by the friends of the College, such as will comport with the moral prestige which your institution has achieved.

Lebanon is one of the prettiest sites for an inland city in the western country. Its natural aptitude for drainage, for an abundance of water, and its sightly elevation, all conspire to make it a location where all the modern conveniences of civilization can be easily and economically provided, and Edison's harnessed horses of lightning, before the next decade, will place your College within 15 minutes' ride of St. Louis, the ruling queen of the great Father of Waters, and Lebanon will be its educational suburb.

As I have already stated, it will not be long until we can announce to the public that the debt on McKendree is liquidated, after which I am sure this Conference will give its cordial co-operation to raising the \$75,000 endowment, to which I have already called attention. There should be found within the bounds of your Conference fifteen men who would raise that amount; certainly, and promptly, seventy-five men who would each give \$1,000.

An endowment of \$100,000 accomplished, and the task part of your work will have been forever finished. McKendree, thus rehabilitated, on an assured basis of finance, the glory of its past memories, together with the prestige of its great moral record, would bring to her coffers the contributions which would build it up to the great proportions which her sixty years of moral foundation warrants.

McKendree will never die. Time is growing old. His step is faltering. Bending under the burden of accumulated milleniums of centuries, he will eventually stagger by the last mile stone on the highway of his pilgrimage to eternity. When he does, it will not be his privilege to look back, with goulish glee, upon McKendree, as one of the many wrecks he has made in his merciless career of devastation.



